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ABSTRACT

A study of 55 school districts and a group of opinion leaders examined the status of arts education in Arizona. Information from surveys collected and interviews conducted throughout 1995 and 1996 was analyzed to determine whether or not improvement occurred following the 1988 "Vision 2000" program. Survey responses and interviews suggest: (1) signs of improvement appear along with indications of status quo maintenance; (2) four out of ten respondents thought the overall status of arts education was better now than five years ago, another third thought it was about the same; (3) significant support for arts education exists among school personnel and parents; (4) funding, staffing, and curriculum were identified as the most critical need over the next 3 years; (5) arts education remains vulnerable to funding cuts, neglect, and competition from other educational priorities; (6) local sources of external funds are often used to supplement district funds but the potential for private funding of the arts has not been fully tapped; and (7) Arizona schools compare reasonably well with schools nationally in terms of the provision of visual art, music, and other arts programs. Recommendations are made for continued study, establishment of arts education quality indicators, monitoring, and mechanisms for reporting and sharing statewide data regarding the status of arts education. (MM)

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Transitional Times for Arts Education in Arizona

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Transitional Times for Arts Education in Arizona

Prepared for:
Arizona Arts Education Research Institute
including
Arizona Commission on the Arts • Arizona Department of Education
Arizona State University • Northern Arizona University • University of Arizona

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1934 Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, co-founder of the Museum of Northern Arizona, wrote that "a thorough art education, starting when we are very young, is of the greatest benefit to every human being..." Colton published her ideas in ***Art for the Schools of the Southwest—An Outline for the Public and Indian Schools*** and put them into practice through the Treasure Chest, an outreach program which brought art education to many of Arizona's rural and reservation students for the first time. In the more than 60 years since Colton's plan, many Arizona arts professionals, educators, and policy makers have continued her advocacy and expanded on her ideas. As a result, awareness of the arts—both as complex disciplines worthy of in-depth study and significant vehicles for learning in other areas—has increased and undergirded efforts to make the arts as much a part of the K-12 experience as science for the states's now more than 650,000 students. The past decade, in fact, has been the state's most significant period of development for arts education. Over that time, many parents and school district officials have lent their support as state arts and education agencies, advocacy and professional organizations, and higher education have spoken in favor of arts education and backed their words with action.

The step-by-step efforts of particularly the Arizona Commission on the Arts, Arizona Department and State Board of Education, Arizona Board of Regents, and the state's three universities have resulted in the adoption of state "Essential Skills" in four arts disciplines and "core" status for music and visual art in grades 1-8, plus arts requirements for high school graduation, assessment, admission to state universities, and certification of new elementary and special education teachers. Collaborative research grants for university and public school faculty have been created also.

Vision 2000 Goal Areas

- Delivery Systems
- Assessment
- Advocacy
- Resource Development

Late in 1994, hundreds of Arizona arts and education professionals and advocates came together to plan for the next stage of development in arts education. Based on a desire for equal access to all the arts for all students, their product, ***Vision 2000***, is a comprehensive plan which includes goals for programs, assessment, advocacy, and resources. Specific players are assigned responsibility for implementation of concrete strategies. A

partnership comprised of the Arizona Commission on the Arts, Arizona Alliance for Arts Education, Arizonans for Cultural Development, and Arizona Department of Education has distributed ***Vision 2000*** widely and is leading its implementation.

With the approval of the various state-level policies and the creation of a vision for the future, the spotlight has shifted to the state's more than 220 independent school districts and 1,000 elementary, middle, and high schools. Indeed, ***Vision 2000*** acknowledges that local activities and support are now primary.

To help determine how best to support and monitor local development, the Arizona Commission on the Arts contracted with the Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona State University through the Arizona Arts Education Research Institute to provide an overview of the status of arts education in Arizona. This report presents information from 55 school districts and a group of "opinion leaders" throughout Arizona. It also provides some comparisons with ***The Status of Arts Education in Arizona Public Schools*** (1988), ***Status of Arts Education in American Public Schools*** (1991), and ***Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*** (1995).

The 55 school districts that participated in the arts education survey included large and small, rich and poor, arts-oriented and not. Half of the responses came from metropolitan areas, half from rural locales. The information was collected in late 1995 and early 1996 through a two-part survey that was initially mailed to all district superintendents. Postcards and telephone contacts were used to encourage participation. While not statistically representative of all of the state's school districts, this broad-based bellwether group's feedback provides insights into today's education environment, a sense of how arts education is faring in Arizona, and direction for statewide organizations. The 11 opinion leaders interviewed for this project were drawn from state policy making bodies, school districts, advocacy bodies, the arts community, and higher education.

Transitional Times

Readers who have been involved in arts education for some time will not want to wait any longer for the answers to the obvious questions. Is arts education improving in Arizona? Have local situations improved since the landmark 1988 study of the status of arts education in Arizona?

Survey responses and interviews suggest that:

- Signs of development appear along with indications of the status quo. For example, the implementation process has started for the graduation and admission requirements. Arts integration appears to be making a mark, and curriculum has progressed in some districts. But, a tremendous range still exists among the state's school districts in terms of capabilities, programs, and commitment to the arts. The arts have moved forward in some places, but the general state of affairs across the state appears to be as yet largely unchanged. That means that arts education has also not declined substantially.
- Four out of ten bellwether respondents thought that the overall status of arts education in their districts was better now than five years ago and another third thought it was about the same. Participants were concerned about the next five years, however. Most expected arts education in their districts to remain the same or deteriorate by the year 2000. This discouraging outlook may signal that the "sense of possibility" that is evident now may be at risk among those who should be leaders in changing arts education at the local level.
- Significant support for arts education among school personnel and parents endures, and that reservoir of good will remains one of the state's greatest assets.
- Funding, staffing, and curriculum were identified by respondents as their districts' most critical needs over the next three years, especially with new state standards and assessments coming on line. These issues are essentially the same as those suggested in the 1988 survey of Arizona school districts.
- Competition with other education priorities and a local atmosphere of uncertainty and insecurity caused study participants to view arts education as continually vulnerable to funding cuts, neglect, and other situations such as student population growth.
- Local sources of external funds (*i.e.*, PTOs, local arts agencies, community groups) are used most often to supplement district funds. However, the many varied arts resources available to rural and urban communities still appear to be underutilized. The foundations for community-school partnerships appear to have been laid in some places, but the potential for collaborative action has not been realized generally.
- Arizona, as viewed in terms of the bellwether districts, stacks up reasonably well in comparison to schools nationally in terms of the provision of visual art and music and a number of other

Funding, staffing, and curriculum were identified by respondents as their districts' most critical needs over the next three years, especially with new state standards and assessments coming on line.

areas. Comparisons illustrate the slow but steady pace of change in arts education nationwide.

Unquestionably, this is a pivotal period for arts education in Arizona. Support for arts education is strong. Policies are in place, and ***Vision 2000*** provides clear direction for the future. But, the changes and resources needed in many schools to provide "equal access to all the arts" for all students remain substantial and elusive. Arts education in Arizona is probably best described as going in the right direction on a long, challenging road.

"Over 9 in 10 Americans simply feel that education of the young will not be complete if the arts are excluded from the curriculum, made optional, or made an 'extra' activity after school. By majorities of close to 10:1, the people are convinced that the arts provide an exciting and deeply enhancing experience in education which not only adds greatly to the confidence of young children, but also makes the process of education much more exciting and interesting for those students. And, they feel the arts give them skills useful in later life."
—Americans and the Arts, 1992

Reservoir of Good Will

Between 1973 and 1996, the American Council for the Arts (ACA) sponsored seven major public opinion surveys on the arts. Data over more than two decades show that Americans have traditionally favored arts education and that their support has remained at high levels over time. In 1992, nine out of ten respondents (91%) agreed that it is important for children "to be exposed to theater, music, dance, exhibitions of painting and sculpture, and similar cultural events." Nearly 90 percent of parents with school age children said they wanted their children to have more experience with the arts than they had as young people. In addition, more than 60 percent said that learning about the arts and gaining skills in the arts disciplines were very important. Two-thirds considered the arts as important as "learning history or geography," with over half put learning in the arts on a par with science, reading, and math. In 1996, "over 9 in 10 expressed the view that when children get involved in the arts in school 'they become more creative and imaginative.'"

Although difficult to harness at times, the power of parental and public support for arts education is one of the field's greatest assets. In 1992, ACA's survey analysis reviewed the commitment to arts education: "Over 9 in 10 Americans simply feel that education of the young will not be complete if the arts are excluded from the curriculum, made optional, or made an 'extra' activity after school. By majorities of close to 10:1, the people are convinced that the arts provide an exciting and deeply enhancing experience in education which not only adds greatly to the confidence of young children, but also makes the process of education much more exciting and interesting for those students. And, they feel the arts give them skills useful in later life."

Arizonans' support for arts education appears to be consistent with the strong national trend.

Arizonans' support for arts education appears to be consistent with the strong national trend. The bellwether respondents rated more

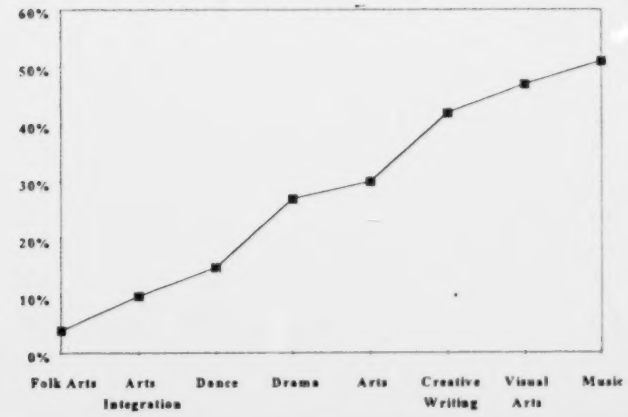
than half of their school colleagues (teachers, administrators, and staff) as supportive or very supportive of arts education. Estimates of parental support were somewhat higher. Nearly 60 percent of parents were thought to be supportive or very supportive of arts education. Strong support among school personnel and parents is in tune with the quite positive feeling among some district respondents about the current status of arts education. Taken together, respondents' perceptions of support and the past five years do not reflect the decline that many might have anticipated. Rather their opinions relate to continual challenges and necessary improvements and the resources still needed to make permanent, substantial change.

A lack of decline is not usually interpreted as a positive. But in this case, the status quo suggests that, despite familiar, ongoing challenges, opportunities still exist for local advocates to make improvements in arts education. In other words, the door is still open for arts education. However, optimism must be matched with assistance. Respondents identified curriculum, funding, and staffing as the critical needs for the near future. Districts strongly communicated a need—and desire—for substantial help and new resources.

Bellwether Survey Overview

Vision 2000 acknowledges that "school and district approaches for quality arts programs must be flexible and built on the needs and resources of the community." The following summary of responses reflects the differences and similarities among districts and shows why flexibility is vital. Questions which referred to specific arts areas included music, visual arts, creative writing, drama/theatre, dance, integrated arts, and folk arts.*

Inclusion of the Arts in District Mission or Goals



Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996

Mission and Goals

It has been said many times that if you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there.

* A note of caution is warranted in interpreting information from the bellwether survey. Graphic presentation of data from a small number of districts may tend to overstate some responses.

Fortunately, many bellwether districts have maps in the form of mission statements that include the arts. Music was mentioned most often, followed by visual arts, creative writing, the arts, drama, dance, and integrated arts. Folk arts were least represented among districts. A small number of districts mentioned goals for band, choir, and mariachi ensemble.

Percent of Districts with Written, Sequential Curricula

Discipline	Percentage with Written Curricula
General Music	64%
Visual arts	59%
Creative writing	49%
Drama/theatre	34%
Dance	25%
Integrated arts	11%
Folk arts	6%

Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996

Curriculum Status and Implementation

Curriculum has been called "the center of people's experience with public education...It is the curriculum with which people interact on a daily basis and in a most immediate way." As the role of the arts continues to change, quality curriculum is an essential building block. Respondents named curriculum development as their most critical need nearly as often as funding. For example, one person wanted "a well defined scope and sequence with written curriculum developed and implemented and cooperative units with other curriculum areas." "Program Development/Curriculum" and "curriculum development and updated texts"were the phrases other respondents used to describe their needs. Those comments were cryptic in comparison to the district representative who said, "Our most critical need is for resources to develop curricula for all arts courses in alignment with new state standards and standards developed by national organizations." The process of creating state standards motivated a number of respondents to ask for help "to develop a curriculum for the arts which is responsive to the new State Standards."

Responses from the bellwether districts indicate that curriculum development has been proceeding in some areas. More than half of the districts reported written, sequential curricula in music and visual art. Fewer districts have applied resources to disciplines other than the two traditionally supported areas.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

The retraining and development of teachers are constantly part of education reform discussions. In their critical needs, a number of districts listed professional development as a vital step in any effort to improve arts education. A very small number of districts is providing arts training to all teachers at least annually. Visual arts and creative writing are generally the featured disciplines in such training. Music and visual art teachers are targeted for additional

training in far less than half of the districts. Arts inservices for district personnel are rare.

Resources For Arts Education

The funding portion of the questionnaire identified prevalent sources of funding for arts education and provided a general sense of allocations for arts specialists. The financial data again reflect the vast differences among Arizona's school districts. Generally, the range of responses was too great to provide anything more than a reconfirmation of the disparities created by location, population, economic base, and local outlook. However, observations can be made in some areas.

- Music specialists and visual arts specialists remain the most prevalent in districts.
- Besides the district funds regularly used for arts education, external funds are important. Local business donations, student activity funds, and PTO funds are relied upon by half of the bellwether districts. Music and visual arts benefit most from outside funds with music receiving the largest share. External funding is particularly important for arts-related field trips and activities with artists and arts organizations.
- Local arts agencies are the most common source of grants for arts education programs, with cultural organizations the next most frequently mentioned resource. However, far less than half of the responding districts tap these resources.

Conclusion

As stated previously, Arizona appears to be going in the right direction on a long, challenging road. Some signs point toward progress in the past five years, while others indicate that much remains to be done. A feeling of optimism and broad support appear to be the greatest assets in arts education in addition to new requirements and policies. The future depends on the implementation of ***Vision 2000***, specifically on how well the arts community and school districts work together to build on local successes, expand commitments, find new resources, and combine mandates with incentives and assistance.

Because cooperation and collaboration are vital to achieving ***Vision 2000***, new mechanisms to track local status and the effectiveness of advocacy efforts are needed at the state level. An ongoing information system would make both monitoring and the sharing of information easier for all of the players in arts education.

A five-part information system for arts education is recommended to make local monitoring and assistance easier and more effective and to support the various components of ***Vision 2000***. The suggested components include:

- In-depth case studies of local programs and practices throughout Arizona
- Selection—with school district input—of a limited number of quantitative arts education indicators for which data could be gathered annually or biennially
- Questions on existing periodic statewide public opinion surveys
- Completion of an Arizona arts and arts education "census" once per decade to facilitate a better understanding of the status of the arts in the state, including the economic impact, educational status, and issues of importance to the public
- Mechanisms to report and share statewide data

This combination of basic information sources would allow policy makers and practitioners to understand fully what is, and is not, happening in arts education from year to year. Considering the long journey Arizona faces to provide the type of arts education described in ***Vision 2000***, continuous quality information will be key to sustaining interest and developing new strategies for success.

TRANSITIONAL TIMES FOR ARTS EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

In 1934 Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, co-founder of the Museum of Northern Arizona, wrote that "a thorough art education, starting when we are very young, is of the greatest benefit to every human being..."[1] Colton published her ideas in ***Art for the Schools of the Southwest—An Outline for the Public and Indian Schools*** and put them into practice through the Treasure Chest, an outreach program which brought art education to many of Arizona's rural and reservation students for the first time. In the more than 60 years since Colton's plan, many Arizona arts professionals, educators, and policy makers have continued her advocacy and expanded on her ideas. As a result, awareness of the arts—both as complex disciplines worthy of in-depth study and significant vehicles for learning in other areas—has increased and undergirded efforts to make the arts as much a part of the K-12 experience as science for the states's now more than 650,000 students. The past decade, in fact, has been the state's most significant period of development for arts education. Over that time, many parents and school district officials have lent their support as state arts and education agencies, advocacy and professional organizations, and higher education have spoken in favor of arts education and backed their words with action.

The step-by-step efforts (Table A on page 2) of particularly the Arizona Commission on the Arts, Arizona Department and State Board of Education, Arizona Board of Regents, and the state's three universities have resulted in the adoption of state "Essential Skills" in four arts disciplines and "core" status for music and visual art in grades 1-8, plus arts requirements for high school graduation, assessment of learning, admission to state universities, and certification of new elementary and special education teachers. Collaborative research grants for university and public school faculty have been created also.

Figure A. *Vision 2000* Goal Areas

- Delivery Systems
- Assessment
- Advocacy
- Resource Development

Late in 1994, hundreds of Arizona arts and education professionals and advocates came together to plan for the next stage of development in arts education. Based on a desire for equal access to all the arts for all students,[2] ***Vision 2000*** is a comprehensive plan which includes goals for programs, assessment, advocacy, and resources (Figure A). Specific players are assigned responsibility for implementation of concrete

strategies. A partnership comprised of the Arizona Commission on the Arts, Arizona Alliance for Arts Education, Arizonans for Cultural Development, and Arizona Department of Education has distributed ***Vision 2000*** widely and is leading its implementation.

Table A. A Decade for Arts Education

1987	The Arizona Commission on the Arts partnered with the Arizona Department of Education on the "Arts in Schools Basic Education Grant," a federally funded planning program.
1988	The Arizona Commission on the Arts and Arizona Department of Education co-sponsored the first ***Statewide Survey on the Status of Arts Education in Arizona Public Schools.***
1988	The "Oak Creek Accord" was the state's initial five-year plan for improving arts education.
1989	The first Essential Skills documents for the arts were approved.
1990	The State Board of Education voted to require at least nine hours of arts study for certification of elementary classroom and special education teachers.
1991	The State Board of Education instituted a one credit fine arts/vocational arts requirement for high school graduation beginning with the class of 1994.
1991	Arizona State University, University of Arizona, Northern Arizona University, and Arizona Commission on the Arts established the Arizona Arts Education Research Institute to fund collaborative research by university faculty and public school teachers.
1994	The Arizona Board of Regents adopted a fine arts requirement for university admission.
1994	The Arizona Alliance for Arts Education, Arizonans for Cultural Development, Arizona Commission on the Arts, and Arizona Department of Education convened ***Vision 2000*** to develop a comprehensive plan for arts education.
1996	Arts are one of nine content areas (in addition to comprehensive health, foreign language, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, technology, the workplace) for which state standards are being prepared under the auspices of the Arizona Department of Education. Standards for music, visual arts, theatre, and dance will describe necessary knowledge and skills in the areas of creating art, art in context, art as inquiry, and integration of the arts.

With the approval of the various state-level policies and the creation of a vision for the future, the spotlight has shifted to the state's more than 220 independent school districts and 1,000 elementary, middle, and high schools. Indeed, ***Vision 2000*** acknowledges that local activities and support are now primary.

"With the inclusion of the arts as part of the national goals and state curriculum, we must not let the opportunity pass for arts education policies to be supported and implemented. However, there is a difference between the passage of policy and the implementation of policy. It is time to articulate clearly how school districts can develop, implement and assess quality arts education programs for all students."[3]

To help determine how best to support and monitor local development, the Arizona Commission on the Arts contracted with Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona State University through the Arizona Arts Education Research Institute to provide an overview of the status of arts education in Arizona. This report presents information from 55 school districts and a group of "opinion leaders" throughout Arizona. It also provides some comparisons with ***The Status of Arts Education in Arizona Public Schools*** (1988), ***Status of Arts Education in American Public Schools*** (1991), and ***Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*** (1995).

Bellwether Districts and Opinion Leaders

The 55 school districts that participated in the arts education survey included large and small, rich and poor, arts-oriented and not. Half of the responses came from metropolitan areas, half from rural locales. The information was collected in late 1995 and early 1996 through a two-part survey that was initially mailed to all district superintendents. Postcards and telephone contacts were used to encourage participation. A program questionnaire asked about goals, arts teaching, field trips, assessment, student participation, and community support among other topics; a companion funding section explored internal and external funding for the arts and related issues. Information was gathered for the elementary, middle, and high school levels. While not statistically representative of all of the state's school districts, this broad-based bellwether group's feedback provides insights into today's education environment, a sense of how arts education is faring in Arizona, and direction for statewide organizations. Not every district that responded has a substantial arts program. In fact, comments and responses illustrated repeatedly the disparate nature of Arizona's school districts. It is their interest in arts education that makes the 55 participating districts a bellwether.

The 11 opinion leaders interviewed for this project were drawn from state policy making bodies, school districts, advocacy bodies, the arts community, and higher education. Their views were sought

to provide context for the survey and to gain insights from different perspectives. At the end of 1995, each leader was asked seven questions concerning trends in arts education, education trends affecting arts education, outlooks on critical issues, and the future for arts education.

TRANSITIONAL TIMES

Readers who have been involved in arts education for some time will not want to wait any longer for the answers to the obvious questions. Is arts education improving in Arizona? Have policies been implemented? Have local situations improved since the landmark 1988 study of the status of arts education in Arizona?

Survey responses and interviews suggest that:

- Signs of development appear along with indications of the status quo. For example, the implementation process has started for the graduation and admission requirements. Arts integration appears to be making a mark, and curriculum has progressed in some districts. But, a tremendous range still exists among the state's school districts in terms of capabilities, programs, and commitment to the arts. The arts have moved forward in some places, but the general state of affairs across the state appears to be as yet largely unchanged. That means that arts education has also not declined substantially.
- Four out of ten bellwether respondents thought that the overall status of arts education in their districts was better now than five years ago and another third thought it was about the same. Participants were concerned about the next five years, however. Most expected arts education in their districts to remain the same or deteriorate by the year 2000. This discouraging outlook may signal that the "sense of possibility" that is evident now may be at risk among those who should be leaders in changing arts education at the local level.
- Significant support for arts education among school personnel and parents endures, and that reservoir of good will remains one of the state's greatest assets.
- Funding, staffing, and curriculum were identified by respondents as their districts' most critical needs over the next three years, especially with new state standards and assessments coming on line. These issues are essentially the same as those suggested in the 1988 survey of Arizona school districts.
- Competition with other education priorities and a local atmosphere of uncertainty and insecurity caused study participants to view arts education as continually vulnerable to

funding cuts, neglect, and other situations such as student population growth.

- Local sources of external funds (*i.e.*, PTOs, local arts agencies, community groups) are used most often to supplement district funds. However, the many varied arts resources available to rural and urban communities still appear to be underutilized. The foundations for community-school partnerships appear to have been laid in some places, but the potential for collaborative action has not been realized generally.
- Arizona, as viewed in terms of the bellwether districts, stacks up reasonably well in comparison to schools nationally in terms of the provision of visual art and music and a number of other areas. Comparisons illustrate the slow but steady pace of change in arts education nationwide.

"We have made giant strides, but still have a long way to go."

The survey results and leaders' responses underscore what must be the first "law" of arts education—for every positive, there is a negative and vice versa. Some will take heart from a positive outlook on change over the past five years. One rural district reported, "We have made giant strides, but still have a long way to go," while a large metropolitan district said, "We are putting time and effort into improving programs. Specifically we are looking at ways to increase student exposure through more class time and more integration." The respondent who commented, "It is imperative as curriculum development proceeds that the importance of the arts in general academic achievement becomes a focus," understands the challenges the arts face and the reasons why advocates are striving to overcome the barriers.

Others will take note of opposing viewpoints. These readers will point to such comments as, "Principals at each school site need to take a leadership role in requiring that art be taught weekly in accord with district adopted curriculum." The statement about the need for "time in the regular school day to address a non-core academic subject" will be viewed as evidence that nothing has changed. The district representative who wrote, "There are no greater needs in the area of arts education than financial support," identified the issue that always threatens to derail the expansion of arts education.

Unquestionably, this is a pivotal period for arts education in Arizona. Support for arts education is strong. Policies are in place, and ***Vision 2000*** provides clear direction for the future. But at the same time arts education continues to struggle with an image as an "extra" in the school day. Districts often have not given arts

education its due in the face of growth and the allocation of scarce resources. Thus, the changes and resources needed in many schools to provide "equal access to all the arts" for all students remain substantial and elusive. Arts education in Arizona is probably best described as going in the right direction on a long, challenging road.

The following pages further explain these findings and recommend ways in which the development of local arts education can be supported and monitored.

OPINION LEADERS' OUTLOOKS

Despite the prominence of reform over the past decade, improvement of K-12 education remains a controversial topic and a priority with the public and policy makers. In Arizona, charter schools, plus financing issues, population growth, and reaffirmation of local control are just some of the factors that are shaping education now.

When asked to discuss the general education trends shaping arts education and the most important issues in the field, the opinion leaders' responses fell into categories that are closely related to the ***Vision 2000*** goal areas. The headings of Management, Teaching and Learning, and Resource Development are used in the summary of the opinion leaders' perspectives and of the bellwether districts' critical needs.

EDUCATION TRENDS

The following issues were mentioned as general trends affecting education today.

Management

- Decentralization of control from the state to districts to local schools
- Competition among subjects and activities for time, resources, and support
- The increasingly common practice among educators and policy makers of viewing the "arts" as one subject area rather than as distinct disciplines
- Continual public criticism of schools and education
- Emphasis on partnerships between schools and community organizations and businesses
- Development of charter schools

Teaching and Learning

- Continually shifting opinions among the public, policy makers, and educators about what is taught and how
- Changes in the process of assessing what students learn and to what extent they can apply their knowledge
- Continual pressures on teachers
- An emphasis on retraining teachers
- Making teaching and learning appropriate for individual students
- Integration of subjects
- Development of state standards for the arts and eight other learning areas
- Renewed emphasis on schools' role in preparing students for the workforce and smoothing the school-to-work transition
- Escalating "neediness" of students
- Increasingly diverse student populations

Resource Development

- Inadequacy of education funding
- Uncertainty about the future of school funding because of the Arizona Supreme Court decision on the inequities of traditional funding mechanisms

IMPORTANT ISSUES IN ARTS EDUCATION

Arts education is affected by many of the general trends in education. The list below shows how the major trends relate to arts education and additional issues that are specific to the arts. Again, the headings of Management, Teaching and Learning, and Resource Development organize the issues.

Management

- Implementation of Goals 2000, national arts standards, and state arts education policies
- Shortchanging specific arts disciplines because of an emphasis on "arts"
- Gaps between arts education policies and local practices
- Time for the arts in a crowded school day and curriculum
- Keeping arts education as a player in education change
- Decentralization of control from the state to districts to local schools
- Helping parents and community members understand the connections among arts education, learning, and Arizona's quality of life

Teaching and Learning

- Integration of the arts and other subjects
- Creation and acceptance of arts assessment tools
- "Equity" of the arts with other subjects
- Adequate content of arts classes
- Overcrowding of arts classes in some districts
- Balance between arts specialists and classroom teachers as providers of arts instruction

Resource Development

- Funding limitations and competition for resources
- Substitution of external funds for district arts funds
- Increasingly high expectations for contributions from local external sources of funds for visiting artists, plus rising expectations for the number of students served by artists in a short time
- "Air of instability" in school districts which discourages artists from being involved with schools

The Last Half Decade

In the last half decade, more and more Arizonans have chosen to experience the arts, and most have had an expanding range of options from which to choose. In response to questions about what has happened in arts education during that time, opinion leaders noted that, like the general arts community, arts education has also made some gains. They cited strong leadership, plans for arts education at the state and community levels, and various policy changes as encouraging steps. The creation of arts integration programs and new opportunities for teachers and artists to work together were also mentioned as positive developments in the last five years.

Interview participants praised the "significant" arts education policy changes, although they remained deeply skeptical about implementation to date and in the future. One respondent summarized the concerns of several with a description of the graduation requirement as "very fragile" because of small schools' limitations, financial problems, and some districts' resistance to new mandates. Concerns surfaced that understanding of the difference between "doing" (such as ensemble acting or playing in a musical group) and "studying" the arts or a specific discipline had not increased sufficiently in recent years to facilitate the type of arts education called for in state and national plans and standards.

"Not nearly enough change" was how another participant answered the question of what had happened over the past five years. She cited the low instance of dance in schools and the still often trivial nature of school arts activities. A shift to classroom teachers providing arts instruction in primary and middle schools had made programs inconsistent in her opinion and left students in the hands of teachers with "no background." Some high schools were perceived to be displacing the arts with other activities or using magnet schools as an "excuse" for de-emphasizing the arts in other schools.

Some had concluded from recent events and trends that districts' commitment to arts education had waned generally and that mixed signals from the state's education agency were allowing districts to move away steadily from an arts commitment. The reassignment of arts coordinators at the Arizona Department of Education was criticized by most of those interviewed and viewed as justification for local districts to cut arts positions. In other districts, the failure of budget overrides was mentioned as a factor negatively affecting the arts. The positive state-level policy changes of recent years have focused leaders' attention on the local level and highlighted the fact that arts education must now be addressed district-by-district and school-by-school.

Current Outlooks

A theme that emerged from the opinion leaders is that arts education moves forward and backward simultaneously, depending on local circumstances and leadership. For example, mention of the elimination of the arts in one area's high schools contrasted with the reinstatement of programs in another district and the development of new ones elsewhere, partly because of community involvement. Or, many school districts were reported to be stretching artist-in-residence resources to the breaking point because of shrinking resources. But, other districts have addressed their problems by creating partnerships with other community institutions. Artist-in-residence programs have become well established, but some districts now appear to be trying to use them to replace district-based programming. Parents in one area have become heavily involved in arts advocacy because of the "marginalization of the arts." In contrast, parents in another place were reported to be overwhelmed by the burden of being increasingly responsible for funding an arts position. The opinion leaders viewed cultural institutions as needing to increase their education activities further to augment school districts' work. Because of the Arizona Legislature's approval of fees for some

classes, charges for arts classes were viewed as detrimental by some of the opinion leaders. Several reported that students in some areas were paying substantial sums for arts classes and suggested that this may be an issue for arts education advocates to review in the future.

Five Years in the Future

The leaders' outlooks on changes anticipated in arts education over the next five years again reflected a wide range of opinion. However, they agreed that maintaining the present level of arts education over the next five years will be "quite an accomplishment" considering the general environment and education trends. Despite the many challenges, the state-level standards being developed were thought to hold promise and a cadre of concerned, capable teachers, parents, administrators, arts educators, and artists were perceived as available across the state to make them work. Additional changes in the relationships between university and secondary classes and programs were anticipated as was expansion of partnerships and collaborative relationships among arts specialists and classroom teachers. According to one leader, the joint efforts should lead to "more than 45 minutes a week" of arts education.

Leadership was expected to come increasingly from the Arizona Commission on the Arts and groups that perhaps have not emerged as yet. Rapid changes in communication and technology will facilitate advocacy networking as will the long-term efforts to expand grassroots support and understanding. With the activities planned in ***Vision 2000***, some of those interviewed expected awareness of the arts to expand rapidly.

Those interviewed expected alliances among the arts and those with community organizations to develop as well. One theme that emerged from the group is that those programs and disciplines that remain "isolated" would not prosper in the near future because of the emphasis on partnerships.

One opinion leader discussed the value to her rural area of the arts becoming more involved in social services and integrated with non-arts organizations and businesses in coming years. She viewed the creation of many more partnerships between arts and community organizations as a needed—and coming—change for her area. Those interviewed expected alliances among the arts and those with community organizations to develop as well. One theme that emerged from the group is that those programs and disciplines that remain "isolated" would not prosper in the near future because of the emphasis on partnerships.

A feeling that arts education will continue to paddle upstream (as it has for decades) was common among these leaders. At the same time, they expressed a sense of possibility for the future. The

environment for arts education as seen through their eyes is a challenging one in which authority is being pushed to lower levels. But despite this, their belief in the value of arts education sustains their optimism and commitment. Harnessing the sense of possibility and public support may be the key to progress in the next five years.

RESERVOIR OF GOOD WILL

Nationally—

- ***...nine out of ten respondents (91%) agreed that it is important for children "to be exposed to theater, music, dance, exhibitions of painting and sculpture, and similar cultural events."***
- ***Nearly 90 percent of parents with school age children said they wanted their children to have more experience with the arts than they had as young people.***
- ***Over half put learning in the arts on a parr with science, reading, and math.***

—Americans and the Arts 1992

Between 1973 and 1996, the American Council for the Arts (ACA) sponsored seven major public opinion surveys on the arts. Data over more than two decades show that Americans have traditionally favored arts education and that their support has remained at high levels over time. In 1992, nine out of ten respondents (91%) agreed that it is important for children "to be exposed to theater, music, dance, exhibitions of painting and sculpture, and similar cultural events." Nearly 90 percent of parents with school age children said they wanted their children to have more experience with the arts than they had as young people. In addition, more than 60 percent said that learning about the arts and gaining skills in the arts disciplines were very important. Two-thirds considered the arts as important as "learning history or geography," with over half put learning in the arts on a parr with science, reading, and math. In 1996, "over 9 in 10 expressed the view that when children get involved in the arts in school, 'they become more creative and imaginative.'"

Although difficult to harness at times, the power of parental and public support for arts education is one of the field's greatest assets. In 1992, ACA's survey analysis reviewed the commitment to arts education: "Over 9 in 10 Americans simply feel that education of the young will not be complete if the arts are excluded from the curriculum, made optional, or made an 'extra' activity after school. By majorities of close to 10:1, the people are convinced that the arts provide an exciting and deeply enhancing experience in education which not only adds greatly to the confidence of young children, but also makes the process of education much more exciting and interesting for those students. And, they feel the arts give them skills useful in later life."

Arizonans' support for arts education appears to be consistent with the strong national trend. The bellwether respondents rated more than half of their school colleagues (teachers, administrators, and staff) as supportive or very supportive of arts education. The estimates of parental support were somewhat higher. Nearly 60

percent of parents were thought to be supportive or very supportive of arts education. Estimates of support among community residents and businesses dropped somewhat, but responses perhaps pointed to a lack of knowledge among bellwether respondents rather than a lack of support among these groups.

The continuing strong support among school personnel and parents is in tune with the quite positive feeling among district respondents about the current status of arts education. Forty percent of the bellwether respondents thought that arts education's overall status in their districts was much or somewhat better than five years ago. More than a third of the remaining respondents put the status at about the same. In light of the challenges districts have faced in recent years, the perception of improved status is encouraging. Indeed, the number who ranked the status "about the same" can also be viewed as positive. Taken together, respondents' perceptions of the past five years do not reflect the decline that many might have anticipated. Rather, perceptions relate to challenges or improvements. A lack of decline is not usually interpreted as a positive. But in this case, the status quo says that opportunities still exist for local advocates to make improvements in arts education and to address the challenges. In other words, the door is still open for arts education.

Outlooks on the Future

The bellwether respondents and opinion leaders are unfortunately of one mind about the near future. Their positive or neutral outlooks on the past do not necessarily translate into optimism about the next five years. Although the majority expected the overall status to be about the same at the turn of the century, more than a third anticipated that the status of arts education would be somewhat or much worse at the close of the 1990s. Despite support for arts education from parents and school personnel, the challenges facing education generally may be viewed as overwhelming. Somewhat low expectations for development in the next five years may mean that the sense of possibility is at risk among those who should be leaders. The ***Vision 2000*** components that address the attitudes of the public and educators may be needed first to counteract concerns about the future. Since "perception is reality," the attitudes among various arts education players are critical to future developments.

Critical, Enduring Needs

Many of the trends and issues discussed by the opinion leaders are mirrored in the critical needs identified by the bellwether

respondents. Their responses show how broad trends play out at the local level. The comments about immediate needs have been organized into the same categories as the opinion leaders' issues, Teaching and Learning, Resource Development, and Management. Comments are presented as written by respondents (Table B on page 14). The responses have also been grouped for comparison across categories.

Table B. Critical Needs as Identified by Districts

Teaching and Learning

- ● Arts Assessment; development of student portfolios as well as teacher portfolios; development of Mariachi curriculum
- ■ To develop a curriculum for the arts which is responsive to the new state standards; staff development; staffing
- ■ Music and drama instruction
- ■ The implementation of technology in the arts will be a new challenge for us.
- ■ One of our 18 elementary schools is developing a dynamic model for integrating Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) into the total curriculum. Thirteen teachers, one administrator, and one art teacher have been trained at the Getty Institute in California. The Art Teacher functions as a resource teacher as well as giving direct art instruction. The principal actively seeks ongoing avenues of support in areas of training, materials, and space. After one semester of implementation, teachers report dramatic change in student thinking, motivation, empowerment, and commitment. There is great evidence of renewed enthusiasm for teaching. We would like to see this model extended to all elementary schools.
- ■ A well-defined scope and sequence with written curriculum developed and implemented. Increase drama and dance opportunities. Cooperative units with other curriculum areas.
- ■ Additional subsidized field trips for art awareness
- ■ Music only doesn't make an Arts Program!
- ■ Currently, the district is making revisions to our curriculum. Teacher developed assessments are the main focus at this time.
- ■ We have seen very positive results in other academic areas since we implemented our model visual arts program ten years ago. We have seen children with some of the most difficult learning problems shine in different artistic mediums and be the beneficiaries of arts education.
- ■ Computer lab to be used by all arts classes; dance rooms; auditorium on both campuses
- ■ Student interest in the arts
- ◆ Integrating fine arts curricula across other curricular areas
- ◆ Determining strategies for integrating technology into the arts curriculum
- ▼ Maintain staff for arts to insure arts for every student
- ▼ Quality applicants for arts specialist positions
- ▼ In three years we will need an additional trained art specialist at the high school level.
- ▼ Staffing—need more instructors to cut down on the class sizes
- ▼ At least one certified art teacher in every school or 1 per 500 students and financial support for the visual arts at this district level
- ▼ Certified teachers
- ▼ Staff development especially in area of assessment
- ▼ Easier access to art education, and training for teachers with more classes or workshops in town

Issue Key:
● – Assessment
■ – Content
▲ – Operations
◆ – Integration
◗ – Population

Table B (continued)

Resource Development

- ■ Find funding to expand the arts program
- ■ Our district desperately needs adequate equipment. We do not have enough instruments, and the instruments we have are of poor quality because there is no budget for repair. Our district has dumped loads of money into technology but has not even spent enough money for the arts teachers to have basic teaching equipment. Our arts programs have all doubled (or more) in size but we look silly compared to other schools when it comes to equipment.
- ■ Additional funding for instruments and programs
- ■ Our most critical need is for resources to develop curricula for all arts courses in alignment with new state standards and standards developed by national organizations. We need resources to train teachers to implement curricula and for instructional materials. There is also a shortage of certified music teachers. We need a full-time arts coordinator to oversee the program.
- ■ As prices of art supplies rise, we will need much more money put in art supplies. District budget of $1000 doesn't cover consumable art supplies needed.
- ▲ Our very small availability of staff and low funding make art education (all general education) programs difficult to provide at the level necessary.
- ▲ The fiscal responsibilities of maintaining a high quality arts program are overwhelming. With decreased state and federal support of education in general, the arts become a target for possible cuts.
- ▲ Parents and school staff want art education, but funding is a problem.
- ▲ Funds—most of what we do is via grants or donations—for consulting specialist in music, dramatic arts, etc. but we have no funds
- ▲ Teachers, buildings/facilities, supplies, budget, program development/curriculum, community support
- ◗ Funding for our rapidly growing district is our most critical need. Program cuts are close at hand. A continual critical need is teacher training in new innovations and improved instructional strategies.
- ◗ With a growing student population, and minimal funding increases from the AZ Legislature, it is becoming increasingly difficult to continue to fund the arts at the same level as in the past.
- ▼ There are no other greater needs in the area of arts education than financial support.
- ▼ If we were to develop an arts education program according to state standards we would need a great deal of $ for staffing and staff development.
- ▼ Funds to support and enhance our art education program; funding for art teachers in Grades K-4
- ▼ Funding for staff and capital expenditures

Issue Key:
- ● – Assessment
- ■ – Content
- ▲ – Operations
- ◆ – Integration
- ◗ – Population

Table B (continued)

Management

- Time in the regular school day to address a non-core academic subject
- The best help we can get from the State would be specific mandated programs and required minutes.
- Arts have not been emphasized but will be in the future.
- As a new administrator I recognize the need in this district for music programs and art education. Currently, students sing, participate in plays and make art projects with little or no instruction in concepts, history or technique. We need a part-time music teacher, performances, exposure to the arts, great performers or instructors, more instruments, text books, sheet music. We are starting with the "Music Factory" series of 10 videos.
- We are putting time and effort into improving programs. Specifically, we are looking at ways to increase student exposure through more class time and more integration.
- Arts have not been a priority in this district. If we can fund development of new curricula which infuses multi-cultural perspectives and aligns with the standards, we can improve the program. We would also like to integrate the arts into other curriculum areas.
- We have a long way to go! It would help if more of a commitment was made by the administration and the school board in the way of support for the arts. They expect quality, but expect us to do it with inadequate resources.
- ▲ Continued support for arts programs
- ▲ We do the best we can with the available personnel and financial resources.
- ▼ We are a small district that finds it difficult to afford staff who are trained in the arts. We need assistance from the state department in a county-based person to assist small rural schools in fine arts instruction.
- ▼ Staff who can perform multiple functions; language arts and art; small size necessitates this.
- ▼ Instill pride in our program

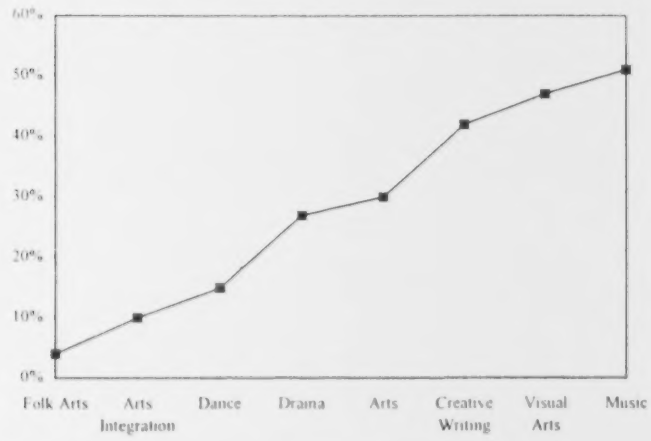
Issue Key:
● – Assessment
■ – Content
▲ – Operations
◆ – Integration
◗ – Population

BELLWETHER SURVEY OVERVIEW

Vision 2000 acknowledges that "school and district approaches for quality arts programs must be flexible and built on the needs and resources of the community."[4] The following summary of responses reflects the differences and similarities among districts and shows why flexibility is vital. Questions which referred to specific arts areas included music, visual arts, creative writing, drama/theatre, dance, integrated arts, and folk arts.*

* A note of caution is warranted in interpreting information from the bellwether survey. Graphic presentation of data from a small number of districts may tend to overstate some responses.

Figure B. Inclusion of the Arts in District Mission or Goals



Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Mission and Goals

It has been said many times that if you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there. Fortunately, many bellwether districts have maps in the form of mission statements and goals that include the arts (Figure B). Music was mentioned most often, followed by visual arts, creative writing, the arts, drama, dance, and integrated arts. Folk arts were least represented among districts. A small number of districts mentioned goals for band, choir, and mariachi ensemble.

Arts Classes and Programs

The arts are provided in a variety of ways in districts. In the best situations, districts tailor the delivery of the arts to foster learning in specific disciplines, while perhaps also supporting learning in other areas. Unfortunately, competition with other subjects for time and resources can relegate the arts to an "extra" status or something that is done "when there is time" according to respondents. The arts disciplines considered in the survey may be the subjects of separate classes, part of other classes, the subjects of special programs, or extra-curricular activities. Whether districts view the arts as part of the "academic" subjects probably affects most how they are delivered and how much time and money are devoted to them.

Districts were asked whether at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels each of seven arts disciplines is provided as a separate subject, as part of another class(es), as extra-curricular, or not taught in the district. Multiple responses were possible. Figures C-F on page 19 illustrate how the districts responded.

Music and visual art are most likely to be separate classes at the elementary and middle school levels. Music stands alone nearly 80 percent of the time at the elementary level and slightly less in middle schools. Almost 60 percent of the elementary providers treat visual art separately. For elementary and middle school students, districts tend to provide creative writing, drama, dance,

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integrated arts, and folk arts as part of other classes. Only at the high school level do substantial numbers of districts provide separate classes in drama and dance.

Because it is most often a part of language arts, creative writing is provided almost exclusively as a part of another class. Visual art is also combined with other subjects in more than 60 percent of the elementary districts reporting. Drama is taught in nearly half of the districts, as are integrated and folk arts. The practice of providing the arts as part of another class appears to hold through middle school for creative writing, drama, dance, integrated arts, and folk arts. Considering the development of arts integration in recent years, the combination of various arts disciplines with other subjects is a prominent alternative for providing time for the arts in some districts.

Although many associate the arts with extra-curricular activities, the bellwether districts illustrate that this is not generally the case. All of the disciplines were extra-curricular in less than a third of the districts at all levels. For all but folk arts, middle school was the level with the greatest percentage of extra-curricular arts activities, where drama, music, and dance were most prominent. At the high school level, music and drama were extra-curricular in 18 percent of the responding districts. The remaining disciplines were extra-curricular in less than nine percent of the districts.

Dance was the discipline most likely not to be taught in a district at all.

Figure C. Arts Delivery - Separate Subject

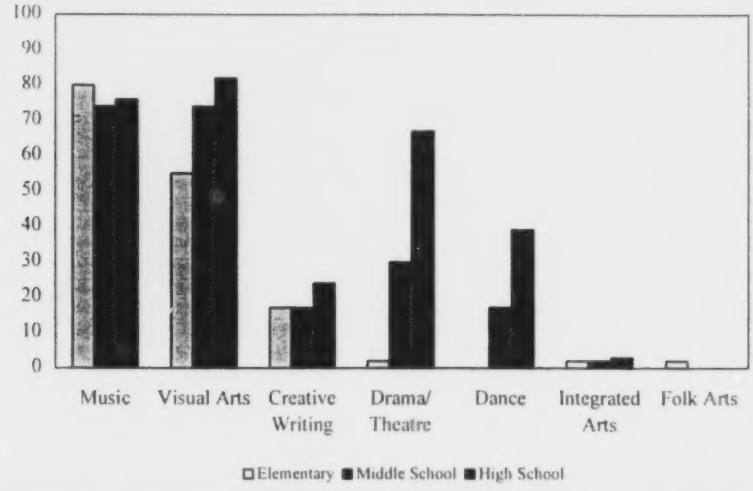

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Figure D. Arts Delivery - Part of Another Class

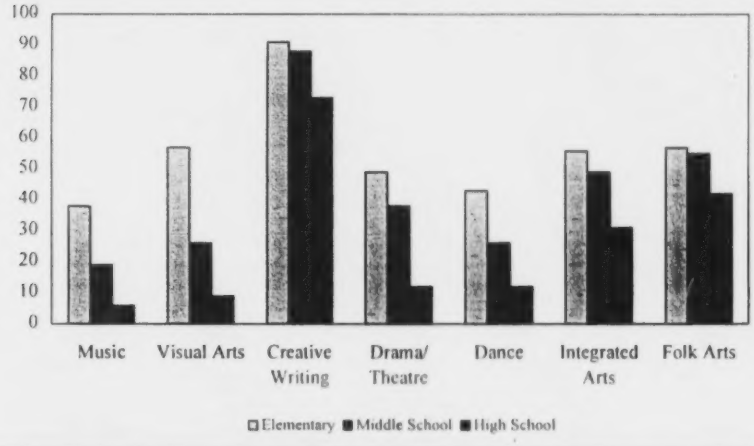

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Figure E. Arts Delivery - Extra-curricular

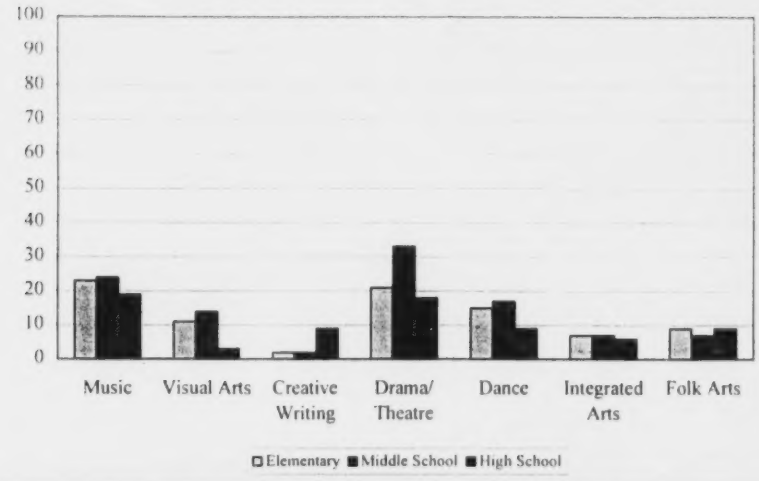

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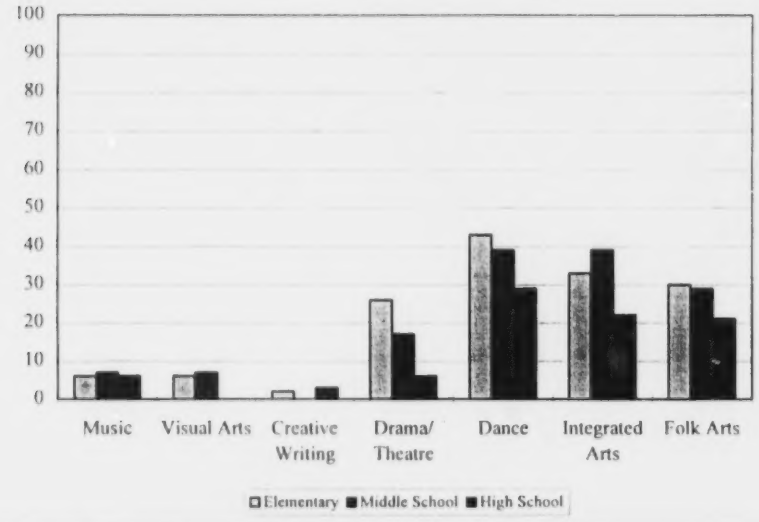
Figure F. Arts Delivery - Not Taught in District



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Arts Integration

The integration of the arts and others subjects was viewed as a progressive trend by opinion leaders and respondents alike. Model programs have often resulted from partnerships between local arts agencies, arts organizations, and schools. Districts with

responsibility for elementary and middle schools were asked to define the extent of integration of the arts and other academic subjects. On a five-point scale with five being completely integrated, respondents put their efforts at just above the midpoint of the scale. Thus on average, districts have passed the half-way mark towards full integration. At the high school level, approximately one-third of the bellwether districts offered a course that combined the study of many art forms into one (generally elective) class such as humanities, arts and humanities, or academic decathlon.

Special Programs

Scores of local arts agencies, local and statewide cultural institutions, and many parent teacher organizations have increased their commitment to arts education in recent years. More opportunities for special programs exist, even in rural areas, and according to some local arts agencies that award grants, interest in funding for special programs is increasing. Of course, the search for outside funds may be a result of district financial problems rather than a desire to expand programming. Also, a lack of internal support may make external programs and funding the only viable source for assistance. Ideally, special programs would be complementing regular programs and providing additional services. However, as suggested by some of the opinion leaders, the best case may be uncommon.

Slightly less than half of the survey districts have special arts programs in addition to their regular classes. Examples of special programs include: field trips after arts-oriented lessons; art club; artist-in-residence activities; Art Masterpiece; music and art therapy; Challenge Art classes; annual art show, folk arts as a foreign language supplement; arts magnet program; mobile arts units for grades K-3. Clearly, what is a "special" program to one respondent is a "regular" program to another. The range of activities illustrates again the differences in arts delivery among districts across the state and the local nature of arts education.

Technology and the Arts

Technology and the arts appeared several times on the "critical needs" list. When mentioned, technology was viewed either as an opportunity for greater involvement in the arts or simply as another requirement that would be difficult to meet. A number of districts have already incorporated some new technologies into their arts programs. In the bellwether districts, video was the most common technology in use, with about two-thirds of respondents

mentioning it. Computers were used in the arts in six of ten school districts. Teachers and students had access to synthesizers in 40 percent of the participating districts.

Field Trips

Field trips are a traditional technique for arts exposure and a tried-and-true performance opportunity for students. In recent years, concerns about a decline in field trips have been particularly prevalent among art educators. In more than two-thirds of the districts, students at all levels participated in one to three arts-related field trips per year. Interestingly, since elementary students tend to have more access generally to arts instruction (at least in music and visual art), elementary students had fewer field trip opportunities than the middle or high school students. Over one-quarter of districts with high schools reported that students participated in more than four arts-related field trips per year.

Although students appear to have some access to field trips, the current number was not compared to the past. It is the perception among leaders that opportunities for arts participation through field trips have declined in recent years.

Student Participation

Because of the complexities of tracking students in many districts, the broad range of classes and types of programs statewide, and the growth of arts integration determining solid numbers for arts participation is difficult. However, it can be said that in the bellwether districts the traditional pattern of declining participation in separate arts classes as students get older (and have more choices about their classes) appears to continue to hold true. General music and visual art enjoy participation levels above 80 percent at the elementary level. However, band, choir, orchestra, and other arts disciplines each include less (sometimes much less) than one-fifth of the students. At the secondary level, none of the arts disciplines included more than 20 percent participation except creative writing, which attracted nearly a third of students.

Providers of Instruction

The question of who teaches the arts is one of the most important and enduring in arts education. The issue surfaced repeatedly among opinion leaders and in districts' assessments of their needs. Partnerships among schools and community organizations, financial problems, and lack of staff are just some of the reasons that who teaches the arts varies from district to district.

Respondents identified the providers of arts instruction across the three age levels. Choices included: classroom teacher; arts specialist; independent professional artist; community-based arts organization; and volunteer (including parents). More than one provider could be listed in each of the seven disciplines used throughout the survey.

Table C. Providers of Instruction

Arts Specialists as Providers in Required Classes	Elementary	Middle School
Music	67%	54%
Visual Art	54%	54%

Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996

Internal providers (*i.e.*, classroom teachers and arts specialists) overwhelmingly outnumber external (*i.e.*, community organizations, volunteers, parents, artists) in every discipline at every age level. Among the internal providers, arts specialists appear to be the primary providers in required classes in music and visual arts in the majority of districts (Table C). Specialists are most prevalent in areas such as band, orchestra, and choral music. However, the perception of the growing importance of classroom teachers providing arts instruction appears to be borne out in the bellwether districts. Whether because of arts integration or lack of specialist personnel, classroom teachers are substantial providers of the arts, especially at the elementary and middle school levels.

Many arts professionals have promoted collaborative teaching among classroom teachers, arts specialists, artists, and volunteers. A "team" of at least two (classroom teacher, arts specialist, independent professional artist, community-based arts organization, or volunteer, including parents) were teaching the arts in approximately a quarter of the responding districts. Music and visual arts were the disciplines most likely to be addressed by teams. Creative writing, integrated arts, and drama were occasionally mentioned as team areas.

"Our most critical need is for resources to develop curricula for all arts courses in alignment with new state standards and standards developed by national organizations."

Curriculum Status and Implementation

Curriculum has been called "the center of people's experience with public education...It is the curriculum with which people interact on a daily basis and in a most immediate way."[5] As the role of the arts continues to change, quality curriculum is an essential building block. Respondents named curriculum development as their most critical need nearly as often as funding. For example, one person wanted "a well defined scope and sequence with written curriculum developed and implemented and cooperative units with other curriculum areas." "Program Development/Curriculum" and "curriculum development and updated texts" were the phrases

Table D. Percent of Districts with Written, Sequential Curricula

Discipline	Percentage with Written Curricula
General Music	64%
Visual arts	59%
Creative writing	49%
Drama/theatre	34%
Dance	25%
Integrated arts	11%
Folk arts	6%

Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996

other respondents used to describe their needs. Those comments were cryptic in comparison to the district representative who said, "Our most critical need is for resources to develop curricula for all arts courses in alignment with new state standards and standards developed by national organizations." The process to develop state standards motivated a number of respondents to ask for help "to develop a curriculum for the arts which is responsible to the new State Standards."

Responses from the bellwether districts indicate that curriculum development has been proceeding in some districts. More than half of the districts reported written, sequential curriculum in music and visual art. As shown in Table D, fewer districts have applied resources to disciplines other than the two traditionally supported areas.

Guides Used in Preparation of Arts Curricula

Districts often seek assistance with curriculum development, and they depend on guides from a variety of sources. Among the bellwether districts, the Arizona Department of Education was almost the exclusive source of curriculum guidance in music and visual arts. (This connection is not surprising considering that the state has adopted "Essential Skills" for these disciplines.) Nearly half also looked to the state department for support in creative writing, drama, and dance. Materials from national arts associations, particularly those related to music (37%) and visual arts (45%), appear to be an important resource. The National Standards for Arts Education, published in 1994, are informing curriculum development in more than four out of ten districts. If districts have an arts curriculum, they tend to have put resources into implementing it. This appears to be particularly true in music, visual art, and drama with strong majorities rating implementation as close to "full."

- ***Among the bellwether districts, the Arizona Department of Education was almost the exclusive source of curriculum guidance in music and visual arts.***
- ***Nearly half also looked to the state department for support in creative writing, drama, and dance.***
- ***The National Standards for Arts Education, published in 1994, appear to be informing curriculum development in more than four out of ten districts.***

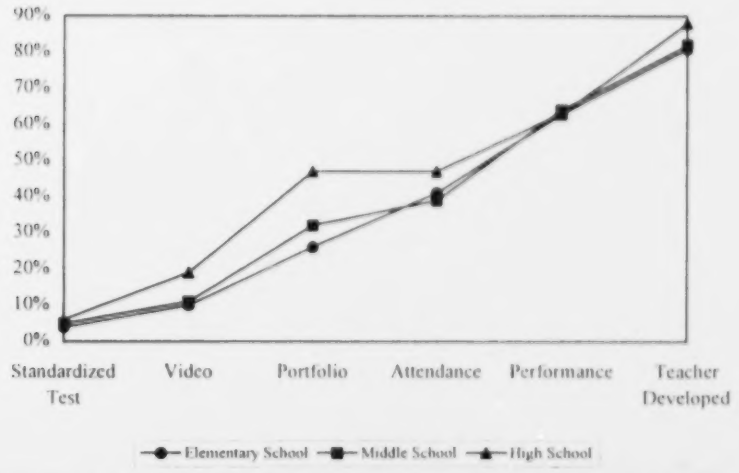
Districts' choices for financial and technical assistance were explored also. The Arizona Department of Education and Arizona Commission on the Arts were the primary sources of assistance for at least half of the reporting districts. Arts education associations and higher education were viewed as resources by a quarter of the districts. In addition, local music stores, consultants, museums, national foundations, local civic groups, "friends" groups,

university performing arts centers, and local arts agencies were mentioned specifically.

Assessments and Requirements

National and state standards have made assessment of the arts an important topic. Also, education trends have changed attitudes toward assessment and emphasized combining methods to test thinking and the application of learning. Among the bellwether districts, teacher-developed assessments continue to be the most prevalent tools. However, the substantial use of other types of assessments illustrates the recent trend (Figure G).

Figure G. District Assessment in the Arts



Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996

Arts for Graduation

As has been mentioned throughout this report, concern about implementation of the arts graduation requirement is strong among arts professionals. Table E on page 26 shows which fine arts and vocational arts courses "count" for the arts graduation requirement in the bellwether districts. This is a composite list from all respondents. All the classes listed are not available in all of the reporting districts. Similar courses have been grouped together, but all levels and district-specific names are listed. The course lists highlight the numerous, yet traditional, offerings for both fine and vocational arts.

Table E. Graduation Requirements

Fine Arts Courses Meeting Graduation Requirement

- Visual arts
  - All art
  - Art
  - Advanced art
  - Art I and Art II
  - Art I, II, III, IV
  - Ceramics
  - Sculpture and Ceramics I
  - Design Fundamentals
  - Drawing
  - Painting
  - Portfolio prep
  - Drawing/painting
  - Independent study
  - Photography I and II
- Dance
  - Dance I and II
- Drama/Theatre
  - Drama I and II
  - All acting
- Music
  - General music
  - Band
  - Beginning, intermediate, concert band
  - Jazz ensemble
  - Chorus/choir
  - Mixed chorus
  - Concert choir
  - Guitar
  - Beginning and advanced guitar
  - Orchestra
  - Beginning and concert orchestra
  - Piano lab
  - Piano
  - Hand bells
  - Folklore/Mariachi
  - Study of rock music
- Arts
  - General arts
  - Performing arts
  - Integrated arts
  - Humanities
  - Art/humanities

Table E (continued)

Vocational Arts Courses meeting Graduation Requirement

- Vocational arts, (industrial, home, and business)
  Business management
  Accounting
  Keyboarding
  Word processing
  Home economics
  Child care/guidance
  Nursing aid
  Construction skills
  Welding
- Auto I, II, III
- Programs in foods and clothing
  Culinary
  Design/fashion
- Industrial technology
  Technology
  Information technology
- Vocational agriculture I, II, III, IV
  Agriculture I, II
  Agricultural/Technological education
- Commercial art
  Graphic arts

Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996

Fees for Arts Classes

In 1994 the Arizona Legislature authorized school districts to charge student fees for various types of activities. Intended for extra-curricular activities, an unanticipated outcome of the change was the charging of fees for arts classes in some districts. Bellwether districts reported the fees that are currently required in their districts. Only a quarter of reporting districts currently have fees or will begin them in the near future. The responses have been categorized by discipline, but are presented as written by the respondents (Table F).

Table F. Fees for Arts Classes

Music	Art	Photography	Ceramics	Design/ Fashion	Other
• $10 per music class to cover uniform cleaning fees • $5 Beginning, intermediate, and concert band • $5 Guitar I and II • $5 Jazz lab • $5 Orchestra • $5 Piano • $20 per arts class with competition (*i.e.*, band, orchestra, choir) • $5 per semester	• $10 per art class for supplies • $7 per art class per semester • $5 Art • $25 Directed study • $10 Drawing/painting • $15 Independent study/art studio • $15 per art class • $5-8 per semester • $5 per year for visual art at high school level	• $10 Photography I and II • $5 Photography per semester plus film and photo paper	• $10 ceramics • $5 Pottery • $8 Ceramics per semester	• $10 Design/ fashion	• lab fees for consumable supplies taken home • High school charges $8 for supplies • Beginning with 1996-97, class fees from $5-40 will be charged for performing and visual arts classes

Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996

This overview of arts delivery cannot answer questions about quality and content. In discussing their most critical needs, respondents often referred to needing assistance to improve their programs. One administrator wrote, "I recognize the need in this district for music programs and art education. Currently students sing, participate in plays and make art projects with little or no instruction to concepts, history or technique. We need a part time music teacher, performances, exposure to the arts, great performers or instructors, more instruments, text books, sheet music..." The results do point out the continuing need for local support and assistance throughout the state.

MANAGEMENT

Arts Administration

For the approximately three quarters of districts that do not employ either a full- or part-time arts administrator, arts management is part of another job or it is not done at all. Roughly one quarter of districts have a full- or part-time administrator, and another quarter utilize a teacher who is assigned the job in addition to other duties. A third quarter is taken by other combinations of people, with the last quarter reporting that "no one" does the job. Some of the "other" staff include: curriculum directors, administrators for

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curriculum and instruction, superintendents (in very small districts), classroom teachers, and principals. Curriculum and instruction managers appear to be the most common arts leaders. Approximately half of arts administrators were reported to have at least one arts certification.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

The retraining and development of teachers are constantly part of education reform discussions. In their critical needs, a number of districts listed professional development as a necessary step in any effort to improve arts education. A very small number of districts is providing arts training to all teachers at least annually. Visual arts and creative writing are generally the featured disciplines. Music and visual art teachers are targeted by management for additional training in far less than half of the districts. Arts inservices for district personnel are rare.

Opportunities for professional development experiences are quite common for individual teachers, however. As shown in Table G, time and support are widely available among the bellwether districts. The survey did not measure the extent to which these options are used. Also, direct financial incentives for professional development are least likely to be offered.

Table G. Support of Professional Development

Professional Development Resource	Percent of Districts Offering
Release time	82%
Paid substitutes	78%
Paid registration fees	69%
Travel subsidy	51%
Salary credit	47%
Credit towards career advancement	22%

Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996

RESOURCES FOR ARTS EDUCATION

The funding portion of the questionnaire identified prevalent sources of funding for arts education and provides a general sense of spending for arts specialists. The financial data again reflect the vast differences among Arizona's school districts. Generally, the

range of responses was too great to provide anything more than a reconfirmation of the disparities created by location, population, economic base, and local outlook. However, general observations can be made in some areas.

- Music specialists and visual arts specialists remain the most prevalent in districts.
- Besides the district funds regularly used for arts education, external funds are important. Local business donations, student activity funds, and PTO funds are relied upon by half of the bellwether districts. Music and visual arts benefit most from outside funds with music receiving the largest share. External funding is particularly important for arts-related field trips and activities with artists and arts organizations.
- Local arts agencies are the most common source of grants for arts education programs, with cultural organizations the next most frequently mentioned resource. However, far less than half of the responding districts tap these resources.

STATE AND NATIONAL COMPARISONS

In the past decade, the status of arts education has been the subject of in-depth research nationally and in many states. This research has played an important part in the revitalization of arts education since in the mid-1980s. ***The Status of Arts in Arizona Public Schools*** was one of many such state surveys to explore the condition of arts education. Sponsored by the Arizona Department of Education and Arizona Commission on the Arts and published in 1988, the findings were representative of all Arizona school districts. In general, although the 1988 report is more detailed, the results are much the same as those of the bellwether survey. Then, as now, the challenges are clear in the availability of instruction and the patterns of participation by students. The major differences are in the areas, such as graduation requirements, in which state-level policy changes have been made. In 1988, research revealed that:

- Funding and curriculum development were identified by superintendents as the most critical immediate and long range needs related to the improvement of arts instruction in their districts.
- Music and visual art were most frequently scheduled as separate subjects, while creative writing was most often a part of other academic areas.

- Parents or community volunteers consistently contributed to district programs in less than 10 percent of the districts.
- The Arizona Department of Education was the most frequently cited source of curriculum assistance and guidance.
- Music, visual art, and creative writing were the disciplines for which a written, sequential curriculum was most often available.
- Less than one third of districts included the arts in their district mission or goal statements.
- Professional development was supported by the provision of incentives such as travel and per diem, release time, and advancement on a career ladder.[6]

Because many of the actual characteristics of arts education have changed little in recent years, people's perceptions of improvement and the state-level policy changes become even more important. Clearly, positive perceptions as revealed in the bellwether survey are the difference to be taken advantage of now.

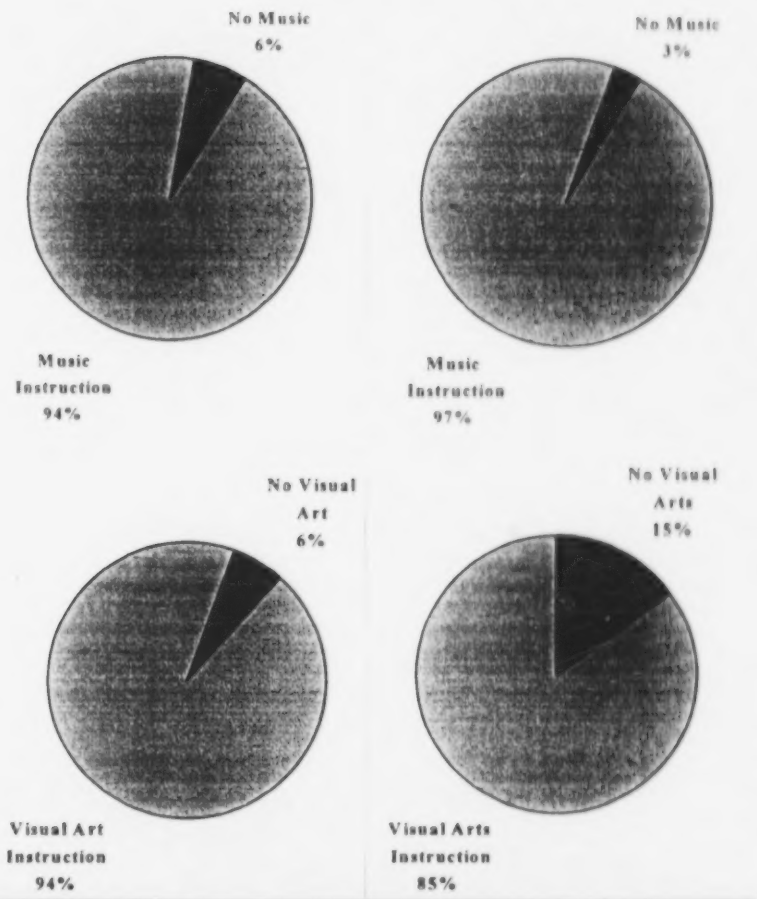
In 1991, the National Arts Education Research Center at the University of Illinois and the National Endowment for the Arts published ***The Status of Arts in American Public Schools***. This nationwide, representative survey was another important "wake-up" call to arts education advocates that the arts were getting less than their due in many U.S. schools. The report provided detailed information on the provision, content, and funding of each arts discipline in small and large elementary, middle, and secondary schools. As in other reports, the 1991 publication revealed limited amounts of time for the arts and insufficient funding. It also described adequate programing in some areas. The earlier state and national studies still warrant the attention of those interested in the arts because of their depth, detail, and comparisons.

Most recently, the U.S. Department of Education funded a representative national survey of arts education in public schools. Published in 1995, ***Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*** is the newest source of national status information.

Below, some comparisons are drawn from the various studies. "Bellwether" refers to the current survey; "AZ 88" relates to ***The Status of Arts Education in Arizona Public Schools***. The most recent U.S. Department of Education study is called "U.S. 1995," while the 1991 study is "National 1991." Not every report is represented in each area selected.

The present bellwether survey and the others mentioned above, although not completely comparable, offer a sense of the status of arts education in Arizona when taken together. Readers are reminded that the bellwether survey is not representative of all districts. Also, the 1988 Arizona survey provided averages for all districts that may be quite different from individual figures for small, medium, and large districts.

Figure H. Comparison of Music and Visual Art Availability



Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996. Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1995, U.S. Department of Education

Mission and Goals

One of the first steps school districts can take to improve arts education is to include the disciplines in their mission and goal statements. This appears to be the trend in Arizona (Table I).

Table H. Arts as Part of District Mission or Goals

Bellwether	AZ 1988
51%	34%

Morrison Institute for Public Policy. 1996. Status of Arts in Arizona Public Schools. 1988

Scheduling Arts Instruction

Some growth from 1988 to the present can be seen in the scheduling of arts subjects as separate classes. However, the more dramatic growth is in the provision of the arts as part of other classes. This most likely illustrates the emphasis on the integration of subjects. In secondary schools, Arizona appears to have made some gains in the number of arts classes and compares favorably to national numbers, except in creative writing.

Table I. Music and Visual Art as Separate Subjects in Early Grades

	Bellwether		AZ 1988		
	Elementary	Middle School	Primary	Intermediate	Junior High
Music	80%	75%	73%	75%	69%
Visual art	57%	75%	44%	48%	52%
Creative Writing	17%	16%	7%	10%	10%
Drama	2%	30%	4%	5%	16%
Dance	0%	18%	3%	3%	4%
Integrated Arts	2%	2%	NA	NA	NA
Folk Arts	2%	0%	2%	2%	1%

Morrison Institute for Public Policy. 1996. Status of Arts in Arizona Public Schools. 1988

Table J. Arts as Separate Classes at Secondary Level

	Bellwether	AZ 1988	U.S. 1995
Music	76%	71%	94%
Visual arts	82%	60%	89%
Drama/theatre	68%	45%	54%
Creative writing	24%	22%	47%
Dance	38%	16%	13%

Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996, Status of Arts in Arizona Public Schools, 1988

Table K. Arts as Part of Other Subjects in Early Grades

	Bellwether		AZ 1988		
	Elementary	Middle School	Primary	Intermediate	Junior High
Music	37%	18%	21%	18%	22%
Visual arts	57%	25%	33%	28%	22%
Drama/ theatre	47%	36%	24%	26%	29%
Creative writing	92%	86%	53%	55%	59%
Dance	27%	27%	14%	13%	14%

Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996, Status of Arts in Arizona Public Schools, 1988

Curriculum

Curriculum development is another fundamental step towards expanding arts education. A number of districts have invested in the development of arts curriculum and its implementation.

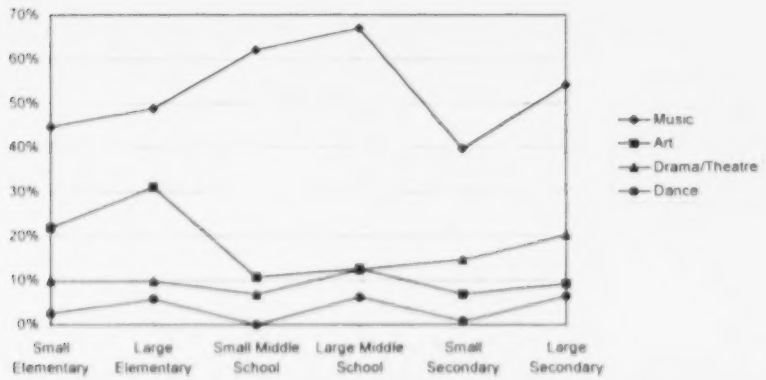
Figure I. AZ 1988 and Bellwether Districts with Written, Sequential Arts Curricula

Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996, Status of Arts in Arizona Public Schools, 1988

Support

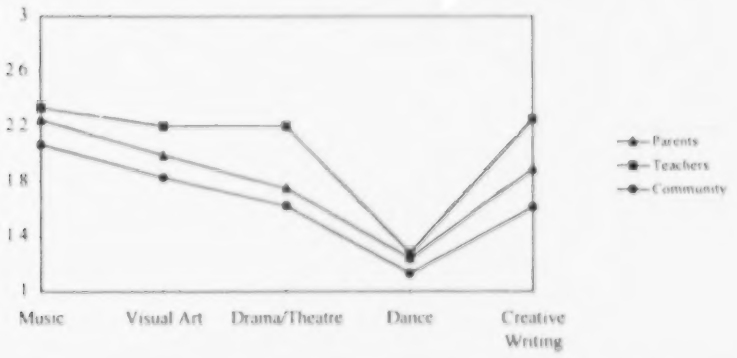
Although support for arts education is perceived to be strong in general, support for individual disciplines varies substantially. Support in Arizona appears to be somewhat below that noted in national studies, but the state numbers are still significant. As shown in the 1991 study, music often enjoys the most substantial support. The 1991 study used percentages of respondents. The 1988 and bellwether studies showed support on scales of one to three and one to five respectively.

Figure J. "Strong" Parental Support for Arts Education: National 1991



Status of Arts Education in American Public Schools, 1991

Figure K. Support for Arts Education in Arizona 1988



Status of Arts Education in Arizona Public Schools, 1988

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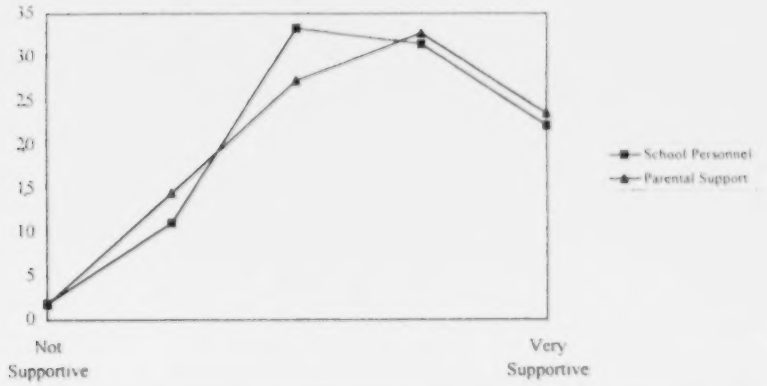
Figure L. Bellwether Support for Arts Education: Parental and School Personnel



Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996

Critical Needs

The following figure illustrates the needs in arts education are enduring and not easily addressed.

Figure M. Comparison of Critical Needs

Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 1996. Status of Arts Education in Arizona Public Schools, 1988

CONCLUSION

As stated earlier, arts education in Arizona appears to be going in the right direction on a long, challenging road. Some signs point toward progress in the past five years, while others indicate that much remains to be done. A feeling of optimism and broad support appear to be the greatest assets in arts education now. These assets will be vital to changing the arts from activities to academic pursuits, from doing to learning, and from some students to all while a sense of possibility exists among district personnel and leaders. The future depends on the implementation of ***Vision 2000***, specifically on how well the arts community and school districts work together to build on local successes, expand commitments, find new resources, and combine mandates with incentives and assistance.

Mechanisms to track local status and the effectiveness of advocacy efforts are one type of new resource that is needed at the state level. An ongoing information system would make both monitoring and sharing easier for all of the players in arts education. While periodic surveys are valuable, they are probably most valuable in conjunction with a standing information system rather than instead of one. Because art education progress must now happen at the community level, there is no substitute for accurate local information.

A five-part information system for arts education is recommended to make local monitoring and assistance easier and more effective and to support the various components of ***Vision 2000***. The suggested components include:

- In-depth case studies of local programs and practices throughout Arizona
- Selection (with school district input) of a limited number of quantitative arts education indicators for which data would be gathered annually or biennially
- Questions on existing periodic statewide public opinion surveys
- Completion of an Arizona arts and arts education "census" once per decade to facilitate a better understanding of the status of the arts in the state including the economic impact, educational status, and issues of importance to the public
- Mechanisms to report and share statewide data

This combination of basic information sources would allow policy makers and practitioners to understand fully what is, and is not,

happening in arts education from year-to-year. Considering the long journey Arizona faces to provide the type of arts education described in ***Vision 2000***, continual information will be key to sustaining interest and developing new strategies for success.

ENDNOTES

1. *MNA Notes Museum of Northern Arizona*, Winter 1996, p. 1.

2. *Vision 2000: Arizona Arts Education Plan*, Arizona Commission on the Arts, 1996, p. 5.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

5. *Making the Grade: Arizona's K-12 Education*, 66th Arizona Town Hall, May 1995, p. 47.

6. *The Status of Arts Education in Arizona Public Schools*, Arizona Commission on the Arts, 1988, p. 140-143.

MORRISON INSTITUTE

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